



State of Tennessee Department of Children's Services

Administrative Policies and Procedures: 14.12

Subject: Child Protective Services Case File Disposition

Supersedes: DCS 14.12, 01/01/02

Local Policy: Yes

Local Procedures: No

Training Required: No

Approved by:

Effective date: 04/01/01

Revision date: 01/01/04

Application

To All Department of Children's Services Child Protective Services Case Managers, Team Leaders, Team Coordinators, Regional Administrators, And Records Coordinators.

Authority: TCA 37-1-403(a), 37-1-406(a), 37-1-410(a and b), 37-613;
37-5-106

Policy

Each local office shall maintain hard copies of child protective services files for a specified period of time based on the type of investigation that was conducted and described in the file. The files shall be destroyed in accordance with established policies and procedures that pertain to the handling of confidential records and destruction of files.

Procedures

A. Identification of closed files

1. In accordance with DCS policy [7.13, Records Disposition Authorization Development and Review Process](#), Regional Administrators must ensure that each region has a uniform record disposition procedure and closed file tracking system of hard copy files. The regional system will include how to tag each record, tracking longevity of records, who to contact for microfilming and how to access microfilming.
2. One year from the date of implementation of this policy, Regional Administrators shall ensure that all closed files in

the region have been labeled and/or destroyed according to this policy.

3. At case closure the CPS team leader or designee shall document in a consistent manner in the file, the appropriate Records Disposition Authorization (RDA) number and projected disposition date, according to the type of investigation:

a) Severe Physical/Sexual Abuse Case Files

- ◆ **RDA-2843** – Case files in this category shall be destroyed after seventy-five (75) years from closure date.

b) Child Fatality Case Files

- ◆ **RDA-2844** – Case files in this category shall be maintained in the agency for ten (10) years from closure date as a paper file. After the ten-year period expires, the file shall be microfilmed and then destroyed.

In investigations containing multiple allegations, the RDA will reflect the most serious allegation.

c) Neglect/Emotional Abuse/Injury Case Files

- ◆ **RDA-2845** - Five (5) years from closure date

This RDA includes non-severe physical abuse investigations.

B. Re-opened files

If a case is re-opened for a subsequent investigation, a new record disposition date shall be determined based on the most appropriate RDA. Prior to file destruction of a case involving multiple investigations, the Team Leader or Designee shall confirm the RDA number and disposition date.

C. Method of record disposal

Approved methods for destroying Child Protective Services confidential paper record information are:

- ◆ Shredding;
- ◆ Burning;
- ◆ Acid bath recycling.

D. Disposal documentation

1. Form GS-0989, *Certificate of Record Destruction*, must be completed in accordance with DCS Policy [9.4, Confidential Child-Specific Information](#).
2. Records disposed of between the effective date of this policy and June 30, 2001 will be processed according to DCS Policy [9.4, Confidential Child-Specific Information](#), and

annually thereafter.

E. Microfilming preparation

1. Microfilming services will be coordinated with the Records and Information Management section and the State Records Center in Nashville.
2. Document preparation for microfilming includes the following:
 - a) Removing duplicate documents;
 - b) Examining records for obvious misfiling;
 - c) Removing staples, paperclips and fasteners from documents;
 - d) Unfolding and flattening documents;
 - e) Repairing frayed edges with mending tape or cutting a fresh edge, provided no loss of documentation results;
 - f) Enlarging small documents (3 x 5 or smaller) and, identifying and copying two-sided documents;
 - g) Taping photographs to 8 ½ -11 size paper.
3. Documents requiring microfilming will be prepared and tracked by the local office.

Forms

GS-0989 Department of General Services Certificate of Records Destruction

Collateral Documents

DCS Policy 7.13, Records Disposition Authorization Development and Review Process

DCS Policy 9.4, Confidential Child-Specific Records Information

RDA-2843 Closed CPS-Severe Physical/Sexual Abuse Case Files

RDA-2844 Closed CPS-Child Fatality Case Files

RDA-2845 Closed CPS-Neglect/Emotional Abuse/Injury Case Files

Standards

None

